

## Code of Ethical Practices and Procedures

The Code of Ethical Practices and Procedures (“the Code”) is established pursuant to 511 IAC 5-5-3 and addresses special concerns regarding appropriate professional practices within the Indiana Assessment System. All school personnel who may be involved with any part of a systematic assessment program should have a copy of and be familiar with the procedures and activities described in the Code.

1. Purpose. The purpose of the Code is to protect the Indiana assessment system so that its intended purposes may be achieved. Purposes include:

- (a) To assess the strengths and weaknesses of school performance;
- (b) To assess the effects of state and local educational programs;
- (c) To compare achievement of Indiana students to achievement of students on a national basis; and
- (d) To provide a source of information for state and local decision makers with regard to educational matters, including the following:
  - (1) The overall academic progress of students;
  - (2) The need for new or revised educational programs;
  - (3) The need to terminate existing educational programs;
  - (4) Student readiness for postsecondary school experiences;
  - (5) Overall curriculum development and revision activities;
  - (6) Identifying students who may need remediation; and
  - (7) Teacher education and staff development activities.

2. Applicability. The Code is generally applicable to all components of the Indiana assessment system, including traditional standardized multiple-choice items, open-ended items, performance assessments, and modified/alternate assessments.

3. Test Security. (a) It is essential that all test materials remain secure before, during, and after test administration. All school and corporation personnel are responsible for test security. Maintaining test security includes:

- (1) Adhering to the Code;
  - (2) Participating in required training; and
  - (3) Following the Protocol for Investigations of Alleged Violation of Test Integrity and/or Intellectual Property Right Infringement (“Protocol”) for reporting and investigating alleged breaches or irregularities, as required under 511 IAC 5-5-4.
- (b) Test materials include examiners’ manuals, assessment books, answer documents, practice tests, test tickets, and online test access codes.
- (c) Students, parents, and guardians are essential to the maintenance of ethical testing practices, test security, and test integrity. School and corporation personnel are responsible for providing communication to students, parents, and guardians regarding appropriate practices for the maintenance of ethical testing practices, test security, and test integrity.
- (d) Test Coordinators, including Corporation Test Coordinators (“CTC”) and School Test Coordinators (“STC”), direct the management of the testing program and shall establish and implement procedures to ensure maximum test security and integrity. Procedures established by a CTC or STC shall:

- (1) Prevent access to secure materials by anyone other than appropriate school and corporation personnel;
- (2) Inventory and track testing materials;
- (3) Control the storage, distribution, administration, and collection of testing materials;
- (4) Report to the Indiana Department of Education (“IDOE”) any allegations of test integrity violations according to the Protocol;
- (5) Prevent the reproduction and/or discussion of testing materials by corporation personnel and/or students;
- (6) Ensure that students use only those reference materials allowed by the testing procedures;
- (7) Ensure that students are not exposed to test items prior to the administration of the test;
- (8) Ensure that students do not exchange information during the test except when the procedures so specify;
- (9) Ensure that the answer booklets are not altered after testing;
- (10) Ensure that student responses are not scored locally and are only scored by the testing contractor as designated by the IDOE.
- (11) Ensure that any allegations of test integrity violations are reported to the IDOE according to the Protocol.

(e) Before each test administration, materials must be distributed and stored according to the Indiana Assessment Program Manual (“Program Manual”). As described therein, testing materials must be secured at all times during test administration, including all breaks in the testing sequence. All test booklets (used and unused) and answer sheets, if applicable, must be counted, reconciled, and returned to a centrally-located, locked, and secured area immediately upon the completion of each daily testing session.

(f) Testing, including make-up testing, must occur during the testing window. With the exception of permitted practice tests and sample items, student access to testing materials shall be restricted to the state-scheduled dates of test administration.

(g) Any allegations concerning cheating, a security breach, a testing administration breach, an intellectual property right infringement, a loss of materials, or other deviation from acceptable and ethical practices and test security and integrity procedures shall be reported immediately according the Protocol.

(h) No secure test materials, test questions, or student responses/answer sheets shall be reviewed, retained, reproduced, paraphrased, or discussed in any manner unless and until such materials are released. *Note: For IREAD assessments, the exceptions permitted under the manual shall not violate this section of the Code.*

(i) School personnel and/or students may not alert examinees to the correct answer choice by pointing to the correct answer, eliminating answer choices, mouthing the correct answer, or using any other mechanism designed to indicate a correct or incorrect answer unless and until such materials are released.

(j) Any individual who administers, handles, or has access to secure test materials at the corporation or school shall complete assessment training and shall annually sign no later

than the last day of August a Testing Security and Integrity Agreement, which shall remain on file in the appropriate corporation-level office for a period of no fewer than three years. Instruction and training shall be provided at the building level by CTCs who have completed the required IDOE-provided training. *For new staff, the training should be provided and the signed Agreement should be collected and appropriately filed as soon as possible or no later than two weeks prior to the next testing window.*

(k) No one shall compromise test security or the accuracy of the test data score results by manipulating the test administration, demographic data, or the students' answers or data.

(l) Student test scores or test performance shall not be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

4. Pre-Test Activities. The most significant consideration in pre-test activities, apart from security issues, relates to maintaining the validity of the assessment scores as estimates of student achievement in the domains being assessed.

(a) The test should not determine the specifics of what is to be taught; rather, the test should measure a reasonable sample of what the curriculum specifies the students should be taught.

(b) Maintaining the proper relationship between the skills measured by the assessment and the curriculum is primarily the responsibility of the administrators or other authorities sponsoring the assessment. For Indiana statewide assessments, the sponsors are the State Board of Education, the Indiana Education Roundtable, and the IDOE. These sponsors should specify what is being assessed (e.g., reading comprehension), and ensure that the items and tasks in the assessment sample those domains as defined in the Academic Standards.

(c) Coordination and communication between the sponsors and the schools are essential. Failure to match assessments and curriculum will lead to results that are subject to misinterpretation, resulting in negative consequences for students, teachers, schools, and corporations.

(d) Although students should be given instruction, experience, and practice with the Academic Standards, the curriculum should not be narrowed to fit the assessment.

(e) Teachers should give students practice with various item types and formats used on assessments to ensure that the assessment will measure only the students' knowledge and understanding and not their test-taking skills. Extensive use of test practice materials is inappropriate. Students should not be given practice on items or tasks known to be part of the assessment.

(f) Reasonable notice of upcoming assessments should be provided to all concerned, including school personnel, students, and parents. However, using this notice to encourage probable low-scoring students to not participate in assessments, thereby raising aggregate scores, is considered unethical behavior. Using notice to encourage probable low-scoring students to not participate may also have a negative impact on a school's A-F grade for lack of participation.

(g) The test coordinator and responsible building personnel should make appropriate arrangements for test administration, including provision for adequate facilities, materials, and training of test administrators and proctors. Test administrators must study the appropriate administrative manuals prior to administering the test. Any needed accommodations must be planned for in advance.

(h) The test coordinator is responsible for ensuring the appropriate administration of practice tests pursuant to the Program Manual.

5. Testing Conditions. (a) Test examiners must follow the procedures in the test manuals, including procedures referring to testing conditions, timing, and instructions. Failure to follow the specified procedures will invalidate the results.

(b) Test examiners must follow accommodations as outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program, Individual Learning Plan, and/or plan developed pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Test examiners must provide appropriate accommodations as required by 511 IAC 5-2-4(b).

(c) Test examiners must provide the appropriate setting based on the mode of assessment and other accommodations to equip students with the optimum test conditions to facilitate students' maximum performance levels. All school personnel involved in administering the test must assume responsibility for the quality of testing conditions.

(d) Test examiners must provide complete sets of materials for all students, including booklets, answer sheets, pencils, scratch paper, and manipulatives, as required. If the test is administered in the online environment, test administrators must provide appropriate technology. This condition must be met before students begin the test.

(e) When reading directions aloud, test examiners must ensure that all students understand what is expected of them on the test and that students have the opportunity to ask questions as needed.

(f) Test examiners must not answer questions about specific test items, but they may repeat initial instructions about item format, scoring rules, timing, and as otherwise permitted by the Examiner's Manual. Test examiners may repeat sample items.

(g) Test examiners and proctors must monitor the testing session to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed. It is not acceptable for test examiners and/or proctors to leave the room, to concentrate on other tasks or materials, or to otherwise ignore what is happening. All examiners and proctors should be trained to understand the testing procedures and their responsibilities as examiners and proctors. Test examiners and proctors must ensure that all students:

- (1) Follow instructions;
- (2) Respond in the appropriate places on answer documents;
- (3) Do not exchange answers;
- (4) Do not interfere with or distract others; and
- (5) Use only permitted materials and devices.

(h) Test examiners must ensure that the test sessions are administered in order. The only exception to the rule that test sessions are to be administered in order is if a student has been absent. If a student has been absent, the student shall begin or resume testing with his or her classmates. Missed sessions shall be made up during a scheduled make-up session prior to the end of the testing window.

(i) If an interruption of testing occurs, the test examiner shall immediately notify the test coordinator who will determine appropriate action. Following the interruption, a written report detailing the interruption must be submitted to the IDOE according to the Protocol.

6. Post-Test Activities. (a) When testing has concluded, test examiners will collect and check all materials and following test security procedures.

(b) Test examiners shall account for all materials and deliver them to the test coordinator. Test examiners shall write a report of all incidents and events that might invalidate any scores, including disruptions, illness, and possible cheating, according to the Protocol.

(c) The test coordinator at each site shall account for all materials. CTCs shall account for all materials from all sites within the corporation.

Note: Italicized text within the document reflects technical changes and clarification added on August 20, 2012.